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A SUPPLY COOPERATIVE-- AS FARMERS SEE IT

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✓ Farmer Cooperative Service



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SUMMARY

The responses of a randomly selected group of farmers in Augusta County, Va., indicate that supply cooperatives in the county are meeting the needs of their patrons. The farmers interviewed depended heavily upon their supply cooperatives, and in most cases they were successful in obtaining needed products and services from them. Ninety-five percent of the farmers interviewed had purchased some supplies from cooperatives in the year preceding the study.

Lower prices for products purchased from the cooperatives, convenience, and products and services available when needed were among the advantages cited by the farmers. The farmers also thought cooperatives held competitors' prices in line. Eighty percent of the farmers could cite no disadvantages in belonging to a cooperative.

The farmers believed their county's major supply cooperative was an efficient operation, was controlled by members, and had been a leader in bringing new farming methods to the area. They also believed the cooperative helped improve their income. The farmers were generally satisfied with the organization, management, and personnel of the cooperative. Information provided by the cooperative in the areas of organization, policies, operations, products, services, and prices was satisfactory to the farmers. Eighty percent of these farmers expressed no need for any product or service not available at the cooperative. To get information or to make known their needs for products and services, most farmers communicated with employees more frequently than with management. Most frequently mentioned as an effective source of information was the cooperative's newsletter.

The farmers believed it was the responsibility of cooperative management to anticipate and provide whatever new products and services might be needed in the future. In general, farmers' responses indicate that initiation of long-range planning cannot be left to the general membership but must be assumed by cooperative management.

2X A SUPPLY COOPERATIVE AS FARMERS SEE IT~~X~~

by Raymond L. Simms and R. Lee Chambliss, Jr.¹

The main concern of cooperative officials interested in the broad problem area defined as "member relations" is expressed in the question, "What do our members and patrons think of us?" In other words, what attitudes do farmers have toward their cooperative or toward cooperatives in general? Are cooperatives (1) meeting the needs of farmers, (2) providing their members and patrons with the facts they desire and need to know, and (3) ensuring effective communications between the cooperative and its patrons?

These and similar questions were studied as they relate to cooperatives' problems in adjusting to current conditions and meeting projected needs of rural people. The first step in such a study is to determine present conditions, needs, and attitudes, and to try to forecast their future trends. Thus, in 1968, a randomly selected group of 197 commercial farmers² in Augusta County, Va., were asked a series of questions regarding their relationship with cooperatives, especially with regard to the major farm supply cooperative serving the county.

The average respondent in the survey was 53 years old, had completed almost 11 years of school, and had resided in the county 44 years. He had approximately 30 years of farming experience and was operating 463 acres of land. In addition, he had belonged to a cooperative 23 years and held current memberships in three cooperatives.

¹ This report is based on the senior author's Master's thesis: *Views Held by Commercial Farmers Respecting Needs, Wants, and Expectations of Supply Cooperatives in Augusta County, Virginia* (Va. Polytech. Inst. Library, Blacksburg, Va., 1969). Simms and Chambliss are Research Assistant and Associate Professor, respectively, Virginia Polytechnic Institute Research Division.

² These farmers were selected from the group of farmers with at least 20 acres of harvested cropland, according to farm records maintained by the Augusta County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service office, and were randomly selected from each of 4 size strata, measured by acreage of harvested cropland, with a variable percentage drawn from each stratum as follows: Of all farmers with 20-49 acres, 6 percent were selected; of those with 50-99 acres, 9 percent; 100-149 acres, 42 percent; 150 acres and above, 87 percent. This procedure provided an adequate number of farmers in each size group to reflect the attitudes of farmers of all economic levels in the composite representation of the 1,400 "commercial" farmers in Augusta County.

Thirty percent of the farmers had served as board members and/or officers of a cooperative at some time, with an average of about 5 years of such service. Most, of course, had served as board members.

In the sample of 197 farmers, 30 percent were primarily dairymen and 5 percent were poultrymen. The remaining 65 percent considered themselves livestock farmers and produced beef cattle, primarily, plus some sheep and/or hogs. About one-third of the total group reported significant amounts of off-farm employment.

Approximately 95 percent of the 197 farmers interviewed purchased some supplies from cooperatives during the year preceding the study; 168 of the farmers dealt most frequently with the Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau, Inc., the major supply cooperative in the county. Only three farmers reported no current membership in cooperatives of any type. Thus, most of the farmers interviewed had the background and experience to develop mature and informed judgments and attitudes toward cooperatives, with particular reference to the local farm supply cooperative.

Because 168 of the 197 farmers most frequently patronized the Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau, Inc., and because it was desirable to focus the attention of the farmers on a common situation, many of the questions asked dealt specifically with that supply cooperative.

Organized in 1929 as a nonstock membership cooperative, it initially sold feed, fertilizer, fencing, and miscellaneous farm supplies, and in its first year's operation had sales of about \$105,000. In 1968, it had sales of nearly \$6 million in feed, meats and groceries, fertilizer, petroleum, and miscellaneous farm supplies. As a measure of its importance to farmers in Augusta County, it is currently merchandizing about two-thirds of the fertilizer in the county.

Although the Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau, Inc., is not representative of all farm supply cooperatives—nor would any other specific cooperative be—it is sufficiently similar in many respects to other local, medium-sized supply cooperatives that attitudes of its patrons should be fairly typical of attitudes of farm supply cooperative patrons in general.

LEVEL OF FARMER SATISFACTION

How well satisfied are farmers with cooperatives—with the goods and services provided, the information disseminated, the pricing practices, the personnel, and the way the business is organized and operated? Do farmers believe their needs are being met, or that cooperatives are really interested in meeting their needs? Do they look upon a cooperative as their own, or as just another firm with which they may do business?

A general statement often made about farm cooperatives is that they are organized to meet the needs of farmers. As these needs change, cooperatives must also change if they are to continue serving farmers effectively. Farmers judge a cooperative not so much on past performance as on how well it serves their current needs. They also evaluate its organization and operation from the viewpoint of efficiency and economy, and judge it in relation to some undefined standard of what they "think it ought to be."

Farmers in the Augusta County, Va., sample seem to believe that cooperatives in that county are

meeting patrons' needs rather well. A high degree of satisfaction was expressed by the 168 farmers interviewed with respect to the methods of organization and operation of their major supply cooperative (table 1). For example, 72 percent believed the cooperative was operated efficiently; 64 percent believed it had helped improve farmers' income; 58 percent said it had been a leader in bringing new farming methods to the area; and 58 percent disagreed with the idea that the cooperative is run by nonmembers. Although 96 percent said that the cooperative served farmers of all ages, 11 percent said it served older farmers primarily.

Despite these favorable attitudes of the majority, the fact that a sizable minority held different views should be of concern to cooperative management. To identify weak spots or sources of dissatisfaction, various aspects of the cooperative must be studied.

The 168 farmers who were patrons of the Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau, Inc., were asked specific questions about that cooperative's employees, manager, and board of directors. Eighty-nine percent believed the employees of the supply cooperative were doing an excellent job in serving patrons (table 2). Only 8 percent reported that they were not, and

Table 1.—Opinions of 168 Augusta County, Va., farmers concerning their major supply cooperative, 1968

Statements concerning cooperative	Agree		Disagree		No opinion	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Co-op has not been an efficient operation	29	17	121	72	18	11
Co-op is run by persons other than members	34	20	97	58	37	22
Co-op has been a leader in new farming methods	97	58	44	26	27	16
Co-op has not helped the income of farmers who trade there	29	17	108	64	31	19
Co-op primarily serves older farmers	19	11	140	83	9	6
Co-op serves farmers of all ages	160	96	4	2	4	2

Table 2.—Opinions of 168 Augusta County, Va., farmers concerning employees of their major supply cooperative, 1968

Statements about employees	Agree		Disagree		No opinion	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Do excellent jobs in serving patrons	149	89	13	8	6	3
Are able to work well with people	152	90	6	4	10	6
Wages paid employees are too high	5	3	77	46	86	51

only 3 percent believed employees' wages were too high. About 90 percent said the employees were able to work well with people.

The manager also got a high rating by the 168 farmers (table 3). Seventy-three percent (90 percent of those expressing opinions) said he was doing a good job and 81 percent said he worked well with the members. When judging the overall performance of the cooperative, 72 percent reported it had been an efficient operation. Why did the overall performance receive only 72 percent approval when performance of the employees had been approved by 89 percent of the respondents? The answer may be that patrons tend to identify the cooperative with the manager rather than with the employees, as suggested by the fact that the 72-percent approval of the overall performance is almost identical to the 73-percent approval rate of the manager.

When evaluating the board of directors of their supply cooperative, the 168 farmers indicated the

following attitudes: 67 percent said members of the board took their job seriously; 69 percent thought the board members did represent the views of the cooperative's patrons; 73 percent evaluated members of the board as well-qualified to direct the business of the cooperative (table 4). Excluding those expressing "no opinion," 93 percent said the board members took their jobs seriously; 88 percent thought the board represented the views of members; 88 percent also thought the board was well-qualified; and 93 percent also thought the directors were interested in serving members.

How much influence do members exert in their cooperative? Farmers interviewed in the Augusta County sample exhibited somewhat conflicting attitudes toward different aspects of this question (table 5). Whereas 76 percent of the 168 respondents believed the cooperative understood their needs and 58 percent said the cooperative is basically run by the members, 58 percent thought they had no influence

Table 3.—Opinions of 168 Augusta County, Va., farmers concerning management of their major supply cooperative, 1968

Statements about cooperative management	Agree		Disagree		No opinion	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Salary of manager is too low	12	7	28	17	128	76
Manager works well with members	137	81	8	5	23	14
Manager doing a poor job of managing	14	8	122	73	32	19
Cooperative has not been an efficient operation	29	17	121	72	18	11

Table 4.—Opinions of 168 Augusta County, Va., farmers concerning board of directors of their major supply cooperative, 1968

Statements about board of directors	Agree		Disagree		No opinion	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Members of board take their job seriously .	113	67	9	5	46	28
Members of board do not represent views of the patrons served	16	10	116	69	36	21
Directors are not interested in serving the patrons	11	6	137	82	20	12
Members of board are well-qualified to direct business	123	73	17	10	28	17
Salaries of directors are too high	8	5	30	18	130	77

Table 5.—Opinions of 168 Augusta County, Va., farmers concerning their influence in their major supply cooperative, 1968

Statements concerning influence in cooperative	Agree		Disagree		No opinion	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Co-op does not understand my needs	22	13	128	76	18	11
Co-op is run by persons other than members	34	20	97	58	37	22
Have no influence on the operations of the co-op	97	58	55	33	16	9
Have influence on the policies of co-op	37	22	95	56	36	22

on the operations of the cooperative and 56 percent that they had no influence on its policies. Eliminating those respondents reporting "no opinion," 85 percent believed the cooperative understood their needs and 74 percent said the cooperative is run by members, but 64 percent thought they had no influence on operations, and 72 percent thought they had no influence on policies.

If it is the prevalent belief among patrons that they have no significant influence in their cooperative, it follows that they will tend to think of the cooperative as something separate from themselves rather than as their own—they will refer to it as "they" rather than "we," or as "the" co-op rather than "my" co-op. Cooperative management should be aware of such feelings, and should make an effort to develop in the patrons a sense of belonging that engenders loyalty and concern.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF COOPERATIVE MEMBERSHIP

Do farmers see any significant value in belonging to cooperatives? If they do, do they believe the advantages outweigh the disadvantages? When all 197 farmers in the Augusta County sample were questioned along these lines, 24 percent could cite no advantages, but 80 percent could identify no disadvantages of cooperative membership.

Advantages of cooperative membership most frequently given were in the area of prices; for example, lower prices of products purchased and holding of competitors' prices in line (table 6). Most farmers gave only one advantage of membership, but 22

Table 6.—Advantages of belonging to a cooperative as given by 197 farmers in Augusta County, Va., 1968

Advantages mentioned	Frequency	Percentage of farmers mentioning
Lower prices for products provided	51	26
Hold competition in line	48	24
Convenience (one-stop shopping)	28	14
Products and services available in time	18	9
Members have a voice in establishing prices and policies	14	7
Increased bargaining power	12	6
Dividend policy	12	6
Good quality products	6	3
Helpful management and credit policies	6	3
Higher prices for product sold	5	2
Other reasons given	8	4
No advantages stated	47	24

percent mentioned two or more advantages. The disadvantage of membership most frequently given was the poor quality of products and/or the absence of variety in products provided (table 7).

Advantages of belonging to a cooperative seemed to outweigh disadvantages in the minds of the farmers interviewed. The few disadvantages cited may have been real, or perhaps the farmers failed to understand the true situation. In any case, cooperative management in general may wish to review operating policies and strengthen their information program to contribute as fully as possible to patrons' satisfaction.

Table 7.—Disadvantages of belonging to a cooperative as given by 197 farmers in Augusta County, Va., 1968

Disadvantages mentioned	Frequency	Percentage of farmers mentioning
No variations in products and/or poor quality products	14	7
Dividend policy	6	3
Prices higher than at other available sources	5	3
Cooperatives are against free enterprise	4	2
Inconvenient location	4	2
Members and nonmembers treated alike	3	2
Other reasons	7	4
No disadvantages.	158	80

COMMUNICATIONS: COOPERATIVE TO PATRONS

Are farmers satisfied with the education and information provided by cooperatives regarding organizations, policies, operations, products and services, and prices? The tabulation below summarizes the degree of satisfaction expressed by the 168 patrons of the Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau, Inc., with such information provided by that supply cooperative:

Subject area	Percentage
Organization (board, membership, meetings, etc.)	81
Policies (credit, withholdings, patronage refund, etc.)	80
Operation (volume of business, savings, expansion plans, etc.)	80
Products and services (variety of products, service charges, etc.)	86
Prices (quality discount, special sales, etc.).	79

About 80 percent of the patrons expressed satisfaction with the information in each area, which indicates that the cooperative had done a good job in providing the desired or expected information. The respondents stating dissatisfaction were asked how the cooperative could provide them better information about the several areas of interest. In the area of cooperative organization, they requested more information dealing with actions of the board of directors and qualifications for membership in the cooperative. In the area of policies, they desired more clarification of patronage refund and credit policies. In the area of

operations, and products and services, the respondents stating dissatisfaction expressed the need for more information in general. The respondents expressing dissatisfaction with price information desired more information on quantity discounts and special sales.

That the majority of respondents said they were satisfied with the information provided by the cooperative may simply mean they were really not concerned with or desirous of much information. The replies expressing dissatisfaction may be much more significant to management. Cooperative management should be continually concerned with improving their information and member-relations programs.

What are the most effective channels of communication used by cooperatives to provide information to patrons, and what other information sources are important? The 168 farmers were asked to identify the most effective sources of information about the Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau, Inc. Their replies are summarized in table 8.

For several years, the cooperative has issued a periodic newsletter, mailed to all patrons, as its major effort to provide information. That this instrument was mentioned three times as frequently as any other would indicate it was a highly successful channel of communication. Because the cooperative made very little use of radio, television, newspapers, and magazines, these media were not frequently mentioned by the farmers; however, this should not depreciate their value to other cooperatives.

Perhaps the most significant finding presented in table 8 is emphasis on cooperative employees and

Table 8.—Frequency distribution of 168 respondents' identification of effective sources of information about the major supply cooperative, Augusta County, Va., 1968

Sources of information	Frequency	Percentage of farmers mentioning
Co-op newsletter	131	78
Co-op employees	44	26
Business contacts	42	25
Co-op magazine or periodical .	40	24
Farm magazines	36	21
Radio and TV	29	17
Newspaper	27	16
Annual meeting of members .	22	13
Relatives and friends	22	13
Co-op handouts (at store).	9	5
Formal discussion groups	6	4
Other	21	12

business contacts as effective sources of information. The key role played by employees who have contact with members and patrons should indicate to cooperative management the necessity of: training these employees in the art of communicating effectively; making certain they possess accurate, adequate information and reflect a proper image of the cooperative; and ensuring that employees and management communicate effectively.

COMMUNICATIONS: PATRONS TO COOPERATIVE

How do patrons communicate with their cooperative? How do patrons inform their cooperative of their needs? Or do they even attempt to do so?

Thirty-three of the 168 Augusta County farmers identified needed products or services that were not supplied by the Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau, Inc. Twenty-five of the 33 farmers said that they informed the cooperative of these needs, and eight said they did not for two main reasons: (1) The cooperative took too long to obtain the product, or (2) they knew beforehand that the cooperative did not and would not provide the product or service.

The farmers who expressed their needs dealt most frequently with employees of the cooperative; informing the manager was the next most frequently used means (table 9). Again, the key role of employees in the communication process is evident. The implication to management may be to impress upon employees the significance of their role, and to ensure through training and incentives that they can and will want to perform well.

Once the cooperative was informed of patrons' needs, did it take action to meet these needs? Half of the Augusta County farmers who said they informed the cooperative of their needs stated that the cooperative took action to meet them; but the other half stated that no action was taken. Of course, in some

Table 9.—Means most frequently used by 25 respondents to inform their supply cooperative of their needs, Augusta County, Va., 1968

Means used to inform cooperative	Frequency	Percentage of farmers mentioning
Discussed with co-op manager .	10	40
Discussed with co-op employees .	15	60
Discussed with co-op director .	3	12
Brought it up at co-op meeting .	2	8

cases, this could mean that after management informed the patron of the reason, no action was taken. If, on the other hand, it means that half the patrons actually heard nothing further concerning their requests, member relations certainly may have suffered. Whether an employee failed to transmit the request or whether management ignored it, the implication to management would be that positive action should be taken to prevent such apparent negligence.

UNMET NEEDS OF FARMERS

What are the needs of farmers that might reasonably be expected to be met by cooperatives but that are not? When asked what unmet needs for goods and services they had experienced in the year preceding the study, 33 of the 168 Augusta County farmers identified specific items not provided by their major supply cooperative. Considerable variety existed in the products and services identified (table 10). The general supplies of seeds, specialized feeds, insecticides, sprays, and salt were the most frequently mentioned items. Equipment replacement parts composed the second most important group of needed products. The most common service needed was storage facilities for grain.

As mentioned earlier, 25 of the 33 respondents identifying needed products and services informed the cooperative of their needs. Twelve of the 25 farmers reported that the cooperative did try to meet their needs; for nine of these 12 farmers the cooperative was successful.

Thirty-one of the 33 respondents said they eventually obtained the products and services they needed. Twenty-two went to sources other than the

Table 10.—Needed products and services not provided by major supply cooperative, identified by 33 respondents, Augusta County, Va., 1968

Products or service	Number of farmers mentioning	Percentage of farmers mentioning
Seeds, specialized feeds, insecticides, sprays, and salt	8	25
Equipment replacement parts	7	21
Storage facilities	5	15
Building materials	4	12
Liquid fertilizer	3	9
Services at branch offices	3	9
Other (lamb pellets, silage covers)	3	9

cooperative. Only two farmers were unsuccessful in obtaining the service or product they needed. Certainly no one business, even a cooperative, can afford to stock every conceivable product or be prepared to fulfill every request for service.

To look into future needs that might be met by cooperatives, all 197 farmers in the sample were asked: (1) What improvements are needed in *existing* services, products, and programs provided by cooperatives in the county, and (2) what *new* services, products, and programs should be provided by existing cooperatives or a new cooperative?

Of the 36 responses to the first question, 31 percent emphasized needed improvements in the area of services provided. Eleven percent requested product improvements, and the remaining 58 percent desired general overall improvements in both areas.

Of the 41 responses to the second question (concerning *new* services, products, and programs), 44 percent were for grain drying and storage services, 25 percent were for liquid fertilizer distribution services, and 20 percent emphasized the need for better quality products. The remaining 11 percent of the suggestions were for improved educational programs and for the formation of a cooperative cattle market.

To what extent suggested unmet needs should be met by existing cooperatives is a matter to be determined by cooperative management. Exploring the possibility of forming new cooperatives would be the responsibility of the farmers most conscious of unmet needs in their area. The farmers should draw upon all available resources for information, advice, critical evaluation of economic need, and other factors affecting the probability of success.

To determine the extent to which they depended upon their supply cooperative to obtain needed products and services, the 168 farmers who were patrons of the Augusta Cooperative Farm Bureau, Inc., were asked what they would first do to try to obtain a product or service that was not being provided by the cooperative. Forty-three percent of the 133 respondents to this question replied that they would ask the cooperative to try to get or provide the product or service. The remainder stated that they would go elsewhere for the product or service, since they knew the cooperative did not provide it. However, the fact that 43 percent would go first to the cooperative indicated a great deal of confidence in the cooperative's desire to serve its patrons.

LENGTH OF COOPERATIVE MEMBERSHIP

Does the length of time a farmer has been a member of a cooperative bear any relationship to his personal characteristics or to his attitudes toward cooperatives? In this study, an attempt was made to find at least a partial answer to this question.

A procedure involving simple correlation and a measure of statistical significance was used to estimate the degree of relationship between length of cooperative membership and each of a number of other factors. Although none of the resulting estimates was at a statistically acceptable level of significance, several interesting relationships appeared.

As the number of years the farmers patronized the major supply cooperative increased, their tendency to hold the following favorable attitudes toward their cooperative increased slightly:

- (1) The cooperative operates efficiently.
- (2) The manager works well with the patrons and is doing a good job.
- (3) The cooperative understands the needs of farmers.
- (4) The board of directors is interested in serving the patrons and well represents the views of patrons.
- (5) The cooperative has been a leader in bringing new farming methods to the area.
- (6) Wages paid the employees are not too high.
- (7) The cooperative does not serve older farmers primarily.

Also, a slight relationship existed between the level of education of all 197 farmers interviewed and the number of years they had belonged to a cooperative—the more years of schooling, the longer the period of cooperative membership. A similar relationship existed between level of gross farm income and length of cooperative membership—the higher the gross farm income, the longer the period of membership.

FUTURE NEEDED ADJUSTMENTS IN COOPERATIVES

What adjustments do farmers think cooperatives will have to make to serve the economic needs of farmers? Do most farmers even concern themselves with such a question?

All 197 farmers in the Augusta County sample were asked what changes, if any, cooperatives would have to make within the next 5 years to meet the county's future agricultural needs. The questions dealt with three specific areas: (1) Size of cooperatives, (2) new products and services, and (3) competition among cooperatives.

In regard to future size of cooperatives, 65 of the 197 respondents stated that cooperatives will have to increase in size to meet agricultural needs in the county 5 years from now (table 11). However, 56 percent expressed no opinion regarding future size requirements, a finding that would indicate a lack of concern with this problem.

Forty-nine of the 197 respondents stated that there will have to be an increase in the services provided (table 12). Some of the respondents implied that changes in agriculture will undoubtedly occur, but that it is the responsibility of cooperative management to foresee farmers' needs that would be expected to result and to provide the required new products and services. This attitude, though unexpressed, is evident also in the fact that 57 percent of the respondents had no opinion on specific future products and services that might be needed.

Although 75 percent of the 197 respondents expressed no opinion regarding competition among cooperatives, 12 percent stated that there will be more competition within the next 5 years. Only 8 percent expected less competition (table 13).

The above responses would indicate that as a group the farmers were not looking into the future with respect to their probable needs. They leave the forecasting of and decision-making about future agricultural needs to cooperative management.

Because so few farmers apparently have formulated ideas or opinions regarding future trends and needs of farming, they should hardly be expected to have done much forward thinking about their cooperatives. Therefore, initiation of long-range planning cannot be left to the general membership. The responsibility must, it seems, be assumed by cooperative management. Management must not restrict itself to providing for present needs, but must also provide leadership in forecasting and planning for future needs of farmers.

Table 11.—Opinions concerning future size of cooperatives, based on replies of 197 respondents, Augusta County, Va., 1968

Respondents' replies	Number of farmers mentioning	Percentage of farmers mentioning
Increase size of co-op	65	33
Decrease size of co-op	2	1
No changes will occur	19	10
No opinion	111	56

Table 12.—Opinions concerning future changes in products and services provided by cooperatives, based on replies of 197 respondents, Augusta County, Va., 1968

Respondents' replies	Number of farmers mentioning	Percentage of farmers mentioning
Cooperative should increase variety of services	49	25
Can't forecast, but changes will occur as need arises . . .	22	11
Responsibility of management to provide new products and services	7	4
No changes will occur	6	3
No opinion	113	57

Table 13.—Opinions concerning future competition among cooperatives, based on replies of 197 respondents, Augusta County, Va., 1968

Respondents' replies	Number of farmers mentioning	Percentage of farmers mentioning
Expect more competition . . .	23	12
Expect less competition . . .	16	8
Expect competition will stay the same	10	5
No opinion	148	75

Other FCS Publications Available

Sizing Up Your Cooperative, Educational Circular 11.

Cooperatives in Agribusiness, Educational Circular 33.

Managing Farmer Cooperatives, Educational Circular 17. Kelsey B. Gardner.

Improving Management of Farmer Cooperatives, General Report 120. Milton L. Manuel.

Using Cooperative Directors to Strengthen Member Relations, Educational Circular 23. Irwin W. Rust.

Exploring Communication Processes in a Farmer Cooperative—A Case Study, General Report 97. James A. Copp and Irwin W. Rust.

Effective Information Devices for Cooperatives, Educational Circular 29. Irwin W. Rust.

Making Member Relations Succeed, Information 32. Irwin W. Rust.

Making Your Membership Publications Do the Job, Information 13.

A copy of each of these publications may be obtained upon request while a supply is available from—

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